

COBBETT'S WEEKLY REGISTER.

VOL. 41.—No. 9.] LONDON, SATURDAY, MARCH 2, 1822. [Price 6d.

Published every Saturday Morning, at Seven o' Clock.

NOTICE.

OWING to want of room the INDEX cannot be included in the present Number. It will be given Next Week without fail. Those Gentlemen who take the Stamped Register may apply for the Titlepage, Table of Contents, and the Index, at the same time.—Office for The REGISTER, at No. 183, Fleet Street, where Letters (post paid) are requested to be addressed.



"This Bill (Mr. Peel's) was grounded on concurrent Reports of both Houses; it was passed by unanimous votes of both Houses; it was, at the close of the Session, a subject of high eulogium in the Speaker's Speech to the Regent, and in the Regent's Speech to the two Houses: now, then, I, William Cobbett, assert, that, to carry this Bill into effect is impossible; and I say, that, if this Bill be carried into full effect, I will give Castlereagh leave to lay me on a Gridiron and broil me alive, while Sidmouth may stir the coals, and Canning stand by and laugh at my groans."—Taken from Cobbett's Register, written at North Hampstead, Long Island, on the 24th of September, 1819, and published in England in November, 1819.

TO THE
MONEY HOARDERS,
*On the Reduction of the Interest
of the Debt.*

Kensington, Feb. 28, 1822.

MY SENSIBLE FRIENDS,

LET the stupid, credulous creatures, who despised my advice of

last summer and last fall, and who kept their stock, after all my warnings, now enjoy the fair fruit of their folly, their obstinacy, and, indeed, their greediness and *real dishonesty*; for, every soul of them, who, by his or her *own act*, or *consent*, is, in this way, a par-

R

Printed and published by C. CLEMENT, No. 183, Fleet Street.
[Price Sixpence Halfpenny in the Country.]

taker in the fruit of the people's earnings, does, in fact, desire to live at ease on the labour of others. Every one, who is voluntarily a fundholder, does voluntarily assist in upholding that, which has sent millions of the labouring classes to an untimely grave through the means of starvation. No voluntary stock-holder will ever make me believe, that he is a just man. He knows well, that his high rate of interest is *unjust*; he knows, that it is against all reason, all the principles of natural justice, all the rules of civil society heretofore known amongst men, all the laws and ordinances of God, that a band of money-lenders should have a *mortgage on the labour of man*, and even on that of *the child in the cradle*. These stock-holders all know, that nine-tenths of the people have not more than half a sufficiency of food; they all know that thousands of industrious tradesmen and farmers have been ruined, and that hundreds of thousands must be ruined; they know that

this misery of the labourer and artisan, this ruin and degradation of the middle class; they know that all this has been caused by the system which they uphold, and by which they are enabled to get three times as much as they, on any just principle, ought to get; and, knowing all this, they cry out *murder*, the moment it is proposed to make them abate, though in a very small degree, of their exorbitant and really iniquitous and cruel exactions! Well enough might the reformers, in 1817, call the fundholder "*a rapacious creature*;" and, the Lords, in their Report, have only put on record the *justice* of the reformers, while thinking to put on record a trait of their *disloyalty*, and of their rebellious intentions.

The measure, which now agitates the minds of so many persons; I mean the reduction of the interest of the *five per cent stock*, is the first step in the *reduction of the interest of the Debt*. That it is *compulsory* every body must see; that it is a deviation from

the terms, settled by the acts of parliament, is clear as day-light; that it will serve as a precedent for further reductions at no distant date may and must be regarded as certain; and the only fault that any just man can find of the measure, is, that it is not *general*, and does not extend over the *whole* of the funds. But, I am not in haste to join in the present clamour against the Ministers. They have a most "*rapacious creature*" to deal with. They have an "*all-devouring monster*" to snatch the prey from. They must proceed, unless they have a reformed parliament, with great caution. They must get on with the monster as well as they can. They will be able to do very little in this sort of way; for another touch or two will make the whole thing crumble to pieces in their hands. But, at any rate, here is *so much* snatched from the monster's jaws; and, for this, I thank the Ministers. I thank them, too, for having fulfilled my great prophecy, namely, that PEEL'S BILL

would never go into *full effect*, without a *reduction of the interest of the Debt*.

The cry of "*national faith*" has, upon this occasion, been set up. But, does *national faith* demand, that the fundholder should receive *three for one*? And, what a pretty legislature this must be that makes laws for us, if it have power to bind the nation to its ruin, and even its annihilation as an independent community! The first duty of every government is, to provide for the existence of the nation as an independent state. And, in case of war breaking out now, is it not manifest, that the Government could not *possibly* provide for this object, and pay the interest of the Debt too? Ought it not, therefore, now, while we have peace and tranquillity, to be preparing thus for the contingency of war? Or, is there a wretch still to be found, capable of asserting to our faces, that we shall *pay as long as we have anything to pay with*, though the consequence be our actual

subjugation? The next duty of every Government is, to provide for the *happiness*, as far as human wisdom can go, of *the whole of the people*. And, how is a people to be happy, if the millions who labour are deprived of a full half of the fruits of their labour to support in comparative luxury the hundreds of thousands who do not labour? The experience of all mankind proves, that *rank* in society is necessary even to its harmony and quiet, to say nothing of that *emulation*, without which a nation must become base and feeble. Whether these ranks should be marked out by what is called *aristocracy*, may be a question; but, if they be not positive, they will still *exist*; and, those persons are very much in error who appear to suppose, that they do not exist in America, for instance, though there less, perhaps, than in any other country. But, *one* aristocracy is enough for one nation. We have *two*; one of *title* and one of *money*; and the latter by far the most oppressive

of the two, existing, as it does, *wholly* on the toil of a half-starved people. This latter aristocracy, besides its all-devouring quality, is most pernicious in the way of moral example. Founded in gambling and deceit of all sorts; owing its elevation to no quality but such as men ought to despise; sprung up like a mushroom without open and recognised cause; sticking up the sharp clerk, or the orange-boy, of yesterday, to lord it over patient industry; laughing at the ingenious and the learned; it naturally and necessarily disinclines youth to pursue the slow and rugged path to ease and opulence, and as necessarily introduces a desire and a hope to become suddenly rich by trick and by fraud. The Devil is the God of the Stock-Exchange, and at his shrine are sacrificed, all that is due to probity, industry, ingenuity, learning and valour.

What duty can, then, be more sacred, even if no particular circumstances pressed the thing upon it, what duty more sacred has a

government to perform, than to demolish this Devil and his shrine ? I do not know, that the Ministers intend this demolition. Perhaps they do not. They say they do not ; and, I am afraid, that in this instance, they are sincere. But, as far as the present measure goes, it is so much in the way of demolition ; and for that so much they are entitled to, and they have, the thanks of one not very much in the habit of praising their deeds.

We are told of the *hardship*, which these stock-holders will experience. The *poor widows* and *orphans* are rung in our ears. Indeed ! Do we forget, then, that these people are now receiving three bushels of wheat for one ; and do we forget, that a very large part of what they receive comes out of the food that the labourer and artisan ought to have and out of the raiment that they ought to wear ? The labouring classes have no *widows* and *orphans*, I suppose ! Look at the endless list of paupers ; and are they not

made such by the *taxes*, and do not these stock-holders swallow the taxes, or, at the very least, three-fifths of them ? As to *humanity*, then, that is decidedly in favour of every such measure ; for, though I am aware, that what is, in this instance, taken from one class of fundholders will be given, for the present, to another class, and more particularly to the crafty and practised Jews and Jobbers ; yet, in the *end*, it will help to overthrow the whole fabric of fraud and baseness.

Besides, did not these stock-holders know the nature of their *property*, as they call it ? Did they not know, that, as it had been made by *acts of parliament*, it could be *unmade* by acts of parliament. Might they not have exchanged it for money long ago ? Yes ; but they felt something of *satisfaction*, of inward pride, at having "a mortgage" on all the lands and on the labour of every living soul that breathed the air of England ! They regarded the industrious classes as their *slaves* ;

they looked upon them as their *property*; they approved of every severity practised against them; when the *power-of-imprisonment bill* was passed, *the funds rose!* That is enough. If, after that, any man can feel pity for a ruined *voluntary* stock-holder, that man is either fool or knave.

But, why waste our time on matters like these. The plain question is this: *shall the interest of the Debt be reduced, or, shall the whole body of the farmers be robbed of their last shilling of capital, and shall the present landlords then lose their estates.* This is the plain question now to be decided. The bill of PEEL is to be kept in force. That is resolved on; and indeed it ought to be resolved on; and, if that Bill be kept in force, it is not more possible for me to swim across the Atlantic than it is for *any rents at all* to be paid this day two years, unless so large a part of the taxes be taken off as not to leave the means of paying (with our pre-

sent establishments) even *one half per cent.* interest upon the Debt.

It is said that the *revenue* has increased. My readers will do me the justice to say, that I never said *it would not*, if *rents went unpaid*. I beg the reader, and you, the money-hoarders in particular, to bear in mind, that the revenue *now* comes, in very great part, *out of rents*, and out of the *capitals of farmers*. The Fund-holder, the placeman, the pensioner, the soldier, the sailor, all the tax-eaters divide amongst them the sums that used to go to pay rents and to add to the *savings* of the farmer and his tradesmen. The classes who now, in fact, receive the rents and the farm profits through the hands of the taxgatherer, *spread them* of course. They lay them out in taxed articles in great part. Soldiers and sailors, for instance, are brave fellows for taxed articles. So that there can be no reason why the *revenue* should *decline*. The revenue is now, in very large

part a deduction from *rents* and from *farming capital*. It is curious nonsense indeed, then, to pretend, that the keeping up of the revenue is a ground of *hope* for the landlords. As well might it be pretended, that because a gentleman's servants receive an addition of income from acts of theft committed on his purse, the gentleman himself is in no danger of having his purse emptied.

When we look at the nature of a farmer's pursuits; when we consider all the inconveniences attending his removal; when we consider his fixed habits and the innumerable objects and feelings that bind him to the spot *where he is*; when we thus view the matter, we are not to wonder, that, in many cases, he remains lingering and *hoping*, though he clearly sees, that he is daily becoming poorer and poorer. But, there must be *an end* to this; and the end is not far distant. The landlord can have *no rent*. He may *let* and he may *seize*; but, in a short time, he must have *bailiffs*

instead of *farmers*. Still he will have *no income*. Now, will this go on, until the *government* actually become the landlord? And yet, to this it must come, unless the interest of the debt be greatly reduced. There is not (Peel's Bill being enforced) the means of paying the tax-eaters without taking away all the rents and *all the tithes too*. And, will it be pushed to this length? Will the landlords and the parsons see it come to this?

All attempts to *raise prices* will prove nugatory. They must come down to the prices, or nearly the prices, of other nations, gold and silver being the currency here as well as there. It is stated, in the public papers, that Mr. BANKES has a project for buying up corn with taxes to put in *granary*. But, suppose corn should get *lower* instead of *higher*? In that case to store up the corn, unless it be destroyed, will augment the evil; and, if *destroyed*, what a wise thing, while we have a *superabundant population*! But, in any

case, unless you destroy the corn, it must come to market *first or last*. And, therefore, first or last, it must lower prices in proportion to its quantity. Of a piece with this scheme is that of lending the parishes money upon their pawned poor-rates to feed the farming labourers! What! First take away the money in *taxes*, and then lend it to be laid out in loans on the poor-rates!

All these schemes tend to prove, that the Ministers know not what to do, and that the case is perfectly *desperate*. Yet, it is not to be believed, that the landlords, who certainly have, *as yet*, the power in their hands, will give up their estates quietly. As I told you, my friends, so often, last year, there will be a *struggle*. Mr. WESTERN now says the same. Indeed the struggle is now *going on*. It was begun by the attack on the malt-tax. The Ministers are in a deplorable state. It is like scalping them to make them touch the debt; but they *have* touched it! Before the *third*

touch, away they go, neck and heels, and *who will succeed them*, and what will *succeed the change*, God only knows; or, it is, at least, far beyond *my* powers of prophesy. One thing, however, I venture to predict; and that is, if these things happen *before* a reform of the parliament take place, England will witness scenes of confusion not surpassed by any thing of the kind that is recorded in the history of any nation upon earth. And this ought to point out to fundholders *what to do*!

In the midst of such scenes "*property*" like that of the funds is very much like that which we sometimes possess in a dream. The French Assembly set out with ardent vows in favour of *national faith*. They were *resolved* to pay honestly to the last farthing. But they soon forgot all about the matter. There are old people now in America, who can show you sacks full of continental money, for which the *national faith* was *pledged*; and for which they never got a farthing

and never will. The common sense and common feeling of mankind is against paying what are called *national debts*, any further than they can be paid without resorting to a seizure of *rents* and *capitals*, and without robbing the labourer of *necessary food and raiment*. And the state of our case is precisely this: we cannot now pay the interest of the debt, without seizing on *rents* and *capitals*, and without half starving the labouring classes.

You see, that the main, and, indeed, the *only* hope of the Ministers, is, that farm produce *will rise in price*. That, upon an average of seasons, is *impossible*, unless Peel's Bill be repealed. And yet this is the *only hope*. All their pitiful measures are founded on this hope. They begin to see, that there can, with present taxes and without a reduction of debt, be *no rents, unless prices rise!* If this hope fail them, then, *where are they?* And where are GAF-
FER GOOCH and STUART WORT-
LEY! I always said, during the

last summer and fall, that *little* would be done *this* winter; yet, that a good deal would be *said*; and that the fate of the funds would be made apparent. It will be just as I predicted. The landlords, for fear of the Radicals, will *try another year*; and then the *tug* will come, unless, which is possible, the landlords should, by that time, be too feeble to make fight of any sort.

However, it is for you to *hoard away*. If they really should put out the four millions of Exchequer Bills, it is possible that the gold may *again disappear!* The Bank can, you will remember, stop paying in *sovereigns* whenever it *pleases*, until May 1823. There are persons, indeed, who will go and demand *bars*; but that is not so convenient. I am of opinion, that these four millions of Exchequer Bills will, at any rate, produce a *something* that will make you look at your hoarded gold with great satisfaction.

You know, that I might now, without more ado, hold the *feast*

of the Gridiron; for this changing 5 to 4 is really a *reduction of the interest of the debt*. But, we shall have much more glaring deeds than this, before Peel's Bill go into full effect. We will, therefore, wait for these before we hold the *feast*. And, besides, I mean to have a farce acted upon the occasion; and the fool's caps and bells are not yet all prepared.

I am your Friend,

WM. COBBETT.

REFORM DINNER

AT

BRIGHTON.

ON Monday the 25th instant, a numerous and highly respectable party of the inhabitants of Brighton dined at the New Inn, for the purpose of discussing the present state of the cause of Reform, Mr. Mott in the Chair.

Mr. Cobbett, in consequence of a special invitation, was present. An excellent dinner was served

up at five o'clock; after the cloth was removed the following toasts were given from the Chair.

The Chairman, in rising to give the first toast he should have the honour to propose, expressed the very great pride he felt in addressing the company assembled on the present occasion, and observed that the scurrilous abuse which had been endeavoured beforehand to be heaped upon the object of their assembling was best answered by the appearance of that so highly respectable and numerous company, to demonstrate their attachment and fidelity to the true principles of the British Constitution, such as it had been when enjoyed by our forefathers, and such as we might yet hope, by the means of a Reform in Parliament, ourselves to enjoy. He would now propose a toast which he was sure would meet their approbation:

"King George the Fourth; and may he never forget the principles which placed his Family on the Throne of these Realms"

"The Constitution in its primitive purity, and may it be preserved; or, rather, may every Englishman do his duty in order that it may be preserved," followed, and was drunk with enthusiasm.

The Chairman then proceeded to propose the health of a gentleman present, their distinguished guest, amongst the services performed by whom for his country his endeavours in particular to obtain that which was now so universally acknowledged to be necessary to the salvation of all, a Radical Reform of the Commons' House of Parliament, were so well known to them all—he meant Mr. Cobbett. This toast was drunk with three times three.

MR. COBBETT, having first returned thanks, proceeded in words of which the following must, of course, be considered as the *substance*, as the speech took rather more than an hour in the delivery. — Considering, Gentlemen, the chain of dependence, the power of influence, which must of necessity exist in a place like Brighton; and, considering, too, the open *threats* and other attempts at intimidation that have,

on this occasion, been made use of, my pleasure must be equal to the honour reflected on you, and, indeed, on this town, by the circumstance, that there are now before me nearly a hundred persons, who, in despite of calumnies and menaces, dare in this most unequivocal manner, avow their unalterable attachment to the cause of *Parliamentary Reform*. As to the particular publication, in which the *threats* that I allude to have been thrown out against you, I have observed, that the publisher has gone so far as to assert, that "the KING is *known* to have a *personal dislike*" to me! This is "*loyalty*" is it, Gentlemen! To represent the Sovereign of a great realm as capable of entertaining, and *expressing*, a *personal dislike* to one of his subjects, never in his employ and who never had come into contact with him; to represent the King in *this light* is "*loyalty*," is it? Besides, while this publisher takes pains to show, that I am a person whose *deep resentment* is a thing not to be *desired* by even Ministers and Kings, how does he show his *loyalty* in asserting that, which, if I were weak enough to believe him, must of *necessity* make me for ever a mortal foe of the King on account of his unjust personal

dislike towards me. Now, Gentlemen, in opposition to this assertion relative to the King's personal dislike to me, I will state what I never did, in a public manner, state before; namely, that His Majesty did once condescend to cause to be signified to me his wish, that I would wait on him at Carlton House! I think I have now Colonel M'MAHON's note, in which that wish was communicated to me. This was, to be sure, when His Majesty was much younger than he is now: it was when I was a "*good boy*:" but, though I was, even then, too little of a courtier not to decline the honour, I have never forgotten that mark of gracious condescension on the part of the Prince, who is now my Sovereign; and, I defy any man to find in any part of my forty volumes of Register a single sentiment tending towards taking from the King any part of his royal prerogatives. In fact, Gentlemen, it is those who flatter Kings, and who plunder the people, that, with loyalty on their lips, are the really disloyal part of His Majesty's subjects; and the publisher here alluded to, is, doubtless, or, rather, wishes to be, one of that number. However, the malice of such persons, under circumstances like the present, is

not calculated to excite our anger, or to call forth expressions even of contempt. When we see the drowning man catch at a straw, our smiles are checked by our humanity; in the present case, laughter is allowable; for, if the irritability, the chagrin, the disappointment, the shame and the mortification of our adversaries naturally call for our pity; still, when we remember their malignity, that pity must give way to our ridicule.—Gentlemen, you, a company of reformers, being here met to confer an honour (and a very great one it is) on him whom you are pleased to regard as a distinguished labourer in the cause, it seems proper, that he should make a sort of *report* to you of the present state of that cause; to lay before you the situation of our old enemies, the Boroughmongers; and give you his opinion as to the time that will probably elapse before they will be compelled to surrender up to us those undoubted rights for the enjoyment of which we have so long contended.—For a long while there was in our camp a great lack of the main munitions of war: I mean *provisions*. Thank God, that lack is now removed to a great distance from us; and, the blessing of *cheapness* seems to be

daily augmenting. Now, therefore, we can wait with more patience; and, besides this circumstance in our comparatively better situation, we had before to wage war against the distinct parties of landlords and fundholders *united*. You will do me the justice to remember, that I have, for many years past, stated, that there must, at last, come *open war* between the *land* and the *funds*. Is not that prophecy, so long laughed at by these two bodies, so long the butt of stupid railing in the pretended loyal, now just upon the point of being verified? Nay, does not Mr. WESTERN, member for the county of Essex, say, that there must be a *struggle* between these parties; and has it not been distinctly declared, in parliament, within these few days (by Lord Stanhope,) that the *interest of the Debt ought to be reduced*? Here, then, are the two bodies, formerly so firmly united against us, approaching fast to open conflict; and here are we lying, not on our *oars* as my lord Grosvenor advised, but (still figuratively speaking) on our *arms*, waiting to take that part in the contest which we shall deem most conducive to the safety and honour of our sovereign and our country. Here we are, waiting

till the struggle between these parties shall make a breach in the ramparts of Corruption; and through the breach, God willing, we mean to enter for the obtaining of those sacred rights for the restoration of which we have so long prayed in vain.—In viewing the relative situation of the belligerent parties; in calmly looking on from our present state of suspension of arms, we cannot but see, that our old and most formidable opponents, the landlords, are in imminent peril. The foe advances *silently*, but most *rapidly*. The *rents*, after this very year, must, except in a few particular cases, wholly cease. Not, probably, half the rents of the last year have been actually collected. This year will see no rents at all, except where circumstances merely local, exist, and in some of the cases where capital yet remains in the hands of the renter. What, then, is to become of the *landlord*? In case of *mortgage* the very name of proprietor will soon pass away. I am an instance in point here. An estate which cost me *thirty thousand* pounds, and mortgaged for *thirteen thousand* pounds, is, by the *law*, at this moment the mortgagee's estate and not mine! How many, many hundreds of landlords will

shortly be in this situation ; but, how few of all those hundreds will, as I now do, *laugh* at this effect of the measures of our unreformed parliament ! Oh, no ! gentlemen, it is to few men that it is given to lose an estate and be *merry* on the occasion ! The main body of the landlords will be, and, indeed, are, the most deplorably miserable of all human beings. Having neither brains nor hands with which to bear up under a loss of property, conscious of this, and still retaining all their wonted pride, they are now in a state of apprehension such as, by a whole class of men was, perhaps, never before experienced. To save them ; to save even a remnant of their estates, it is clear, that they must have the *voice of the people* with them. This they cannot have without restoring to the people their rights ; this they can do only by joining the people in calling for a reform in the House of Commons ; and of this reform they are as yet afraid even more than they are afraid of those with whom they are now engaged in open struggle so desperate !— Those whose business it is to delude them along and to prevent that reform which would tear corruption up by the roots, contrive various grounds of hope to pre-

sent to them, of which I will presently speak, when I have noticed an intimation given in parliament by Mr. WODEHOUSE, an intimation in which the gracious patron of your town is directly implicated. It was perfectly right in this member for the county of Norfolk to express a wish to see the *Civil List* reduced. But, when he added, that he hoped, that the allowances *to all the royal family* would undergo the same operation, though that was right too, the notification, all taken together, seemed to say, that the Civil List, about a million of money, was for the mere *expendings of the king*, than which nothing can tend more to mislead the public and to excite unfounded complaints against his Majesty. It is, Gentlemen, not his Majesty that *spends this money*, but in comparatively a very small portion. It is *voted* to him ; but, for the far greater part it is given to others, and that, too, in a way to give his Majesty no sort of controul over it, to give him not the smallest *choice* as to the distribution of it. Happy, indeed, in this respect should we be, if of that immense sum, called the Civil List, nothing remained for us to pay but what is really spent by the king !— And, as to the *royal family*, whose

allowances are made so much of. It is not *this* family, Gentlemen, that we feel the weight of. There are *other families* the burthens imposed to support whom press on us a thousand times more heavily; and to be freed from which we must have that reform, which is not less necessary to the safety and dignity of his Majesty's throne and the happiness of his mind, than it is to our own prosperity. When the king dissolves the parliament, is it *his people* that he appeals to? You will all answer this question without need of a prompter. What could be so much for the king's dignity and what could give him so much real pleasure, as, in a crisis like the present, for instance, to make a real appeal to his faithful and enlightened subjects; to call them all really about him, and make an earnest appeal to their fidelity, their fortitude, their zeal and their energy? But, can he *now* make any appeal at all to his people? It is *his people* who have by *their choice* produced the present calamities and perils? Have *they*, either directly or indirectly, had any hand in plunging England into a state of *acknowledged ruin* and apprehended convulsion? Can the king, then, have an interest in prolonging a mode of elec-

tion, which, at any rate, has not prevented a state of things like that which now exists? Must it not be evident that the real interest of the king and that of *his people* are inseparable; and can he believe that his people would, if restored to their rights, not do what would be conducive to those inseparable interests? In short, *loyalty* and *reform* mean one and the same thing; and, my decided opinion is, that, if the case were fairly stated to his Majesty, he would have no hesitation in acting in conformity with the prayers that we have so long and so fruitlessly employed.—In the meanwhile, the Ministers are fruitful in inventions to *comfort* the landlords; to make them believe, that they can keep their estates without a reform of the parliament. They tell the landlords, that the *Sinking Fund* is the thing to save them. Oh, monstrous! At the end of *forty years* this Fund has seen *augmenting* incessantly the Debt that it was to *pay off*; the Debt is, at last, greater in amount than the fee-simple price of all his Majesty's dominions, colonies included; greater in amount than all the gold and silver in the whole world; the interest of it three times greater in amount than (according to the statement of Mr.

Lockart) the whole of the rents collected in the kingdom for the last year: and, with all this before them, the landlords are made to believe, that they are to be *relieved* by a reduction of the Debt effected by means of a *Sinking Fund*, and when, if they had any (however small) portion of sense left, they must know, that the money of which this sinking fund consists is raised by taxes paid out of their estates, and, in fact, now is principally made up of *deductions from their own rents!* Good God! And are these the men; are these, who swallow this, the men, who pretend that the common people have not the *judgment* necessary to the choosing of men to make the laws!—Another means of relief, which the Ministers have, with great reluctance, assented to, has common sense in it, namely, a repeal of a part of the *Malt Tax*; but, even in a thing which has common sense essentially in it, the natural turn of the minds of the landlords seems to perversé; for they imagine, and they say, that this will afford them a *trifling relief* by *raising the price of barley!* You laugh, gentlemen, and well you may; for you see at the first glance, that it will not *raise the price of barley at all*. I know,

that I, for instance, shall gain, or save, about *three pounds* a year by this repeal; you know, that you, in proportion to your consumption of malt, will save; the farmer knows perfectly well that he will save both as to his own consumption and that of his labourers and tradesmen; and that, in this trifling degree, he will be *better able to pay rent*. Taxes it is that take away his means of paying rent; and, therefore, in the degree that those are diminished, he will be able to pay rent; but, the reduction of taxes *will not raise prices*; and, as to this particular repeal, who, but a landlord, would ever have been so far imposed upon as to believe that it could raise the price of barley, not *a shilling* in the bushel, but the fifty thousand millionth part of a farthing? Yet, this is the idea of the landlords, who, perverse to the last, seem to regard nothing *as good to them* if it be equally good to the whole of the community; but, before they have lived over another year, they will find, that their total and irretrievable, and I will add just, ruin is to be avoided only by their resolving to make common cause with the people at large, and especially with the labouring classes.—It is the same feeling

that induces the landlords to rely on another source of comfort pointed out by their kind friends, the Ministers; namely, the chance of *bad crops*; not perceiving, that the farmer who has a good crop in a *hundred* bushels of wheat which he sells at *five* shillings a bushel, has just as much money to pay rent with as if he had a bad crop in *fifty* bushels, which he would sell for *ten* shillings a bushel; while, in case of the bad crop, he would, to a certainty, have a greater sum to pay in poor-rates than in the case of the good crop. But, if there be *statesmen* to look upon bad crops as necessary to the restoration of prosperity to a country, are we to wonder, that there should be fox-hunters found to derive comfort from the hope of seeing such crops? — Another ground of hope held out by the Ministers, is, the *neat* measure of turning *five* per cent stock into *four*. This is, in fact, a *reduction of a part of the interest of the Debt*; and, we may hold the "*feast of the grid-iron*" whenever we please. They may *call* this what they like; but, the measure is a measure of reduction of interest: it is giving the stock-holders sixteen shillings *less*, out of every five pounds than they received before. But, as to the

landlords, even this will afford *no relief*; because the money withheld from the Stock-people in this way is not to produce a *reduction of taxes*. It is to be carried to the *Sinking Fund*; and that sinking fund is only just so much money, raised in taxes, to be carried to the Bank (or to 'Change-Alley) to make the whole of the Funds more valuable than they otherwise would be.—A fourth ground of hope for the landlords is presented to them by LORD CASTLEREAGH in the operations of *Nature*! I am, Gentlemen, quite of the taste of this amiable and gentle nobleman. I, too, am for leaving the thing a good deal to the operations of *Nature*! But, I am afraid, that we do not perfectly agree as to the meaning of the words. I wish nature to give us plentiful crops and fine harvests; and, I suspect, that his lordship relies on *Nature* for something very different, and that his hopes are for those same bad crops and wet harvests, of which I have before spoken; and, besides, there is another particular in which I fear his lordship and I differ as to import of the word *Nature*, for, as I take it, if he really meant to leave the landlords to *Nature*, he should not so continually interfere himself by his taxing agents; for, though

Nature has made, in her frolics, many strange things, the devil is in it if his lordship can say, that she ever made a taxgatherer or an exciseman. "Let things *find their level*" is the word; but, how are they to *find* their level, as long as men are sent about to draw the earnings of the people into great heaps to be put into the hands of the government; and while the very nature of the system is to produce loss and ruin on the one hand and unmerited opulence on the other?—There is, however, another great political philosopher, I mean Mr. SCARLETT, who, it would seem, does by no means wish, even in a case where homage to her authority is paid by all the rest of mankind, to leave things to *Nature*. He seems to wish to interfere with her, and, in a manner, too, much more serious than that of the interference of the noble lord. Now I am extremely averse from this kind of interference. In a case where country girls and fellows are the parties principally concerned, it is peculiarly wise to leave the question to nature; for, one thing is certain, do what Mr. Scarlett may, he never will be able to counteract the impulse which she never ceases to give.—However, there is something in this species of interference that calls for a tone other than of mere ridicule. The alleged ground of the project is this: the *poor-rates* are *swallowing up the rents*; therefore, check *improvident* marriages in the labourers; which will cause the poor-rates to be less, and will leave *more for rent*. Now the fact is, that it is not that idleness, drunkenness, and *profligacy*, which have been imputed to the labourers, that have increased the poor-rates. It is *the taxes*; and this is shewn as clearly as daylight in the fact, that the poor-rates have increased in precisely the same proportion that the taxes have increased. It is the taxes, then, and not the bad conduct of the labourers that take away the farmer's means of paying rent. I am by no means supposing, that

Mr. Scarlett *saw* the true cause of the political philosophy of Mr. the want of means to pay rent; Scarlett, I cannot refrain from for I impute to him no knowledge attempting to afford you the means of the subject whatever; but, I of judging of the *size* of his mind. can never refrain from expressing A few days ago, there was a trial my indignation when I hear im- for libel in the court of King's puted to the labouring classes that Bench, in which Mr. Scarlett was ruin which has proceeded solely for the defendant. The plaintiff's from a Debt and from taxes, in lawyer, Mr. DENMAN, made a the creating and imposing of long speech, not about the cause which those classes have never before the court, but about *Mr. Cobbett*. Then came Mr. Scarlett had any thing to do. There may to *defend the action*; and he be, and there are, men to listen went on in the same strain, leav- with patience to the wholesale ing both plaintiff and defendant abuse of those classes from which aside, and working away upon ninety-nine hundredths of us *Mr. Cobbett!* The Chief Justice have sprung; I am not one of thinking, no doubt, that such an those who can thus listen; and, I exhibition did not redound much deem it an act of peculiar base- to the credit of his court, endea- ness in any man to endeavour to voured to send the thing out of it fix upon the labouring classes by recommending *an accommoda- any portion of that ruin which is tion*. No! Mr. Scarlett had not now come upon the landlords and yet got out enough about this which they owe entirely to them- same *Cobbett*; and, on he set selves. — Having trespassed so again with renewed and additional long upon your time, I am afraid ardour. The Chief Justice, then, to detain you a moment longer, looking into the Declaration, *saw, especially by any thing, in which at once, that there was a fatal I may appear to have a personal flaw* in it; and, thereupon, he by feeling; but, having mentioned

his *authority*, *nonsuited* the plaintiff, and thus put an end to this sort of use to which the Lawyers were turning his court!—During the course of his observations, Mr. Scarlett, speaking of me, spoke also of the necessity of “*disabusing* those classes of society upon which his (Cobbett’s) *name*, and not his *character*, “*seemed to have had such influence.*”—You are of these unfortunate classes, Gentlemen! It is my *name*, you see, and not my *character*, that has given me “*so much influence.*” It is my “*singular*” name! Why, to be sure (and that neither you nor I ever perceived it before) my name is very “*singular.*” For, upon examination, you will find, that my Christian “*name*” *begins* with a W, and that my Surname *ends* with a double T; that in the middle of the first there is a double L, and in the middle of the last there is a double B.—Besides these “*singular*” characteristics, each name has *seven* letters in it; and, you know

well, Gentlemen, the necromantic powers of the numbers *three*, *seven* and *nine*, and particularly of the number *seven*. Thus is the wonder explained; and for this we are indebted to Mr. Scarlett. *His name*, unhappily for him, has no such charm. His first name, *Peter*, having *five* letters, and his last name having *eight*; names having nothing “*singular*” in them, and numbers nothing necromantic! and, accordingly, we find it agreed on all hands, that Peter Scarlett is no conjuror, and has not “*such influence,*” I will not say upon “*classes of society,*” but upon any half dozen men in the kingdom, who have the reputation of having brains in their skulls.—Gentlemen, if you can bring yourselves back to seriousness for a moment [there had been great *laughing* here], let me ask you what wonder it is that we behold ruin all around us, when there are even half a dozen persons to listen to projects from a man like this? To listen to projects of *such a*

person for making changes that strike at the very root of civil society, as it has, for ages upon ages, stood in this Kingdom? Gentlemen, I put it to your sense of honour, of candour, of common decency, what must be the mind of the man, who, standing before a jury on their oaths, and before the Chief Justice of England, could give way to feelings so pitiful and to language so consummately ridiculous!--In conclusion, Gentlemen, let me observe, that the prospect of the great and deeply-interested opponents of reform is *dismal* in the extreme, and, of course, ours is bright in the same degree. They *would that all were well*; but, they are induced to fear the only means of making it well. The crafty persons in whom they trust, persuade them, that reform would be revolution, destructive of all property, and God knows what. The landlords still remember, I dare say, that *we* were, in the Reports of the two Houses, in 1817, *accused*

of calling the fundholder "a *rapacious creature*;" and they know that they *now* call him so themselves. We were then *accused* of wishing to *take away* (what nonsense!) *all landed property*; but, the landlords now find that *others*, not we, are really taking it away. Yet, they are made to believe, that reform would *ruin* them! Just as if reform could do any thing *more* than take away their estates! Still, however, absurd and monstrous, as the belief is, on it they are induced to *try another year*! They are induced, in short, to venture their "*last acre*," as Mr. WESTERN truly calls it, from the apprehension that *reform* would "*overturn every thing*." To *reason* with such persons is like reasoning with the winds. On my own part, however, I declare, that I have never *known* any man, who wished for any change in the form of the government of England; and I here, before a body of radical reformers, explicitly state, that

having had much *experience*; having had ample opportunity of judging of the effects of constitutions of government different from that of our own, and knowing that our forefathers enjoyed more real freedom and happiness under a government of King, Lords and Commons, than ever were enjoyed by any people under any other form of government, my anxious desire is (the abuses and corruptions being removed by reform) that my children and my children's children may live under a government of King, Lords and Commons. [A burst of approbation followed the termination of this speech.]

"Prosperity to the Town of Brighthelmstone" was then given by the Vice President, after which several songs were sung in a very excellent manner by different gentlemen, and the evening was spent throughout with the greatest conviviality. The sentiments of several gentlemen were delivered on the subject of the day, in which

was expressed that decided and manly spirit which is entertained for Reform by a very great part of the inhabitants of Brighton, amidst great applause. The company separated at about 11 o'clock, after spending the evening in the most perfect harmony and hilarity.

TO

LAWYER SCARLETT.

LAWYER,

As you seem to regret, that my "*name has so much influence*" with "*certain classes of society*," the information contained in the "*DEVIZES GAZETTE*" of the 7th of February, may be pleasing to you, and may make up, in some degree, for the mortification which you lately experienced in having your harangue *about me* cut short by the *nonsuit*, owing to a *flaw* in the pleadings which you and your worthy brother, Denman, left to be discovered by the Chief

Justice! "Some capital meadow-land, in the neighbourhood of CALNE, was, last week, put up to auction, and sold to the highest bidder at *thirty pounds* an acre! for which, only a few weeks before, *fifty pounds* an acre were *offered, and refused!* This sudden depreciation may, in some measure, be accounted for, when it is known, that, since COBBETT has figured at the Agricultural Meetings, the above neighbourhood *has been inundated with his tracts.*"

There, Lawyer Scarlett! Does not that please you? Now, mind, persons that can give fifty, or thirty, pounds an acre for land, cannot be of those classes, to whom you would fain hope my "*influence*" is confined. How long might *you* bawl and rant and scold and tear your throat, before you could cause land to fall, not forty per cent, but the millionth part of a farthing in the hundred pounds! The feelings and objects of this foolish Editor are very much like yours; and, like you,

he only exposes those feelings, and really honours him whom he is so anxious to vilify.

What surprises people most, in you, is your *weakness*. The other parts of your character surprises nobody; but, that you should be so *weak* as to suppose, that any thing said by *you* can do injury to *me* is what no one can account for; no one, at any rate, but me, who know you a vast deal better than you appear to know yourself. But, even with this perfect knowledge of you, I myself am surprised, that you should be vain enough to suppose, that, by any humbug exhibition, or any cuckoo cry about "*inconsistency*," you could make the people of England, and at this time of day too, distrust my judgment or disregard my warnings! And that the same thought should possess the head of Mr. Denman, who with his unhappy church-yard voice and look of half-drowned mariner, talked for an hour, not about plaintiff or defendant, but about the "*inconsistency*," of Mr. Cob-

bett! That you should entertain such a hope, does really surprise even me.

"*Inconsistency!*" Vain and weak Lawyer Scarlett! Do you imagine that the people of England, with all that they now behold, are to be drawn away from attending to me by any such worn-out nonsense? Do you think, that the people *split straws*, as you do? Do you think that *you* can furnish them with any motive to dislike him who has been their teacher, forewarner, and guide? Do you think, for instance, that you will persuade any of the thousands of farmers whom I have saved from utter ruin, and who proclaim aloud that I have so saved them; do you think, that they will listen to your everlasting harpings about "*inconsistency?*" What do they, or what do any of the people, care about the result of your garblings? They say, and they all say, "Cobbett's "*right!* It is *all come true!* It "*is just as he always said it would be!*" And, do you think, that

you, that *you*, that a man like *you*, is going to beat this out of their heads!

But, why did you not come to EPSOM, and there tell the farmers of my "*shocking inconsistency?*" You live in *Surrey*: I heard the name of (I think it was) *Peter Scarlett* read at the end of the *first* requisition. You know that *that* meeting had been rendered nugatory *by me*. You must have known, that I should be at Epsom at the *second* meeting. Why, since you thought necessary, so fit, so proper, so becoming, so suitable to the place, to entertain the *Chief Justice* and the *Jury*, with endeavours to "*disabuse*" certain classes of society, upon "*whom the name of Cobbett had so much influence;*" why, since such was your view of the necessity of achieving this object, that you attempted it at such a risk of the charge of a want of common decency; why did you not come to *Epsom*, and there "*disabuse*" the people to my *face*? Why did you not come, and, before the

farmers and the landlords of the county in which you reside, *fairly try* your strength against me; let the public see how much more powerful the *name* of PETER SCARLETT was than that of WILLIAM COBBETT? Curious thing! that you should choose, for spluttering at me, in the Court of King's Bench, the very moment when I was ready to face you at Epsom!

Cheer up, however, for you have now got the *Duke* of Buckingham with you! He, as the newspaper report says, wishes you to come on again with that *Bill*, the hapless fate of which we had to lament so deeply last year! I will, another time, take the words of his *Grace*, as reported in the paper and will endeavour to show his *Grace*, that the families of the labourers do not, whatever *some other families* may do, *live on the country as annuitants*; but, on the contrary, that the families of labourers have been reduced to pauperism by

having the fruit of their labour taken away to keep in idleness and luxury those other families. At the time (next week) that I do this, I shall also notice the *Squeaker's* speech at *Montgomery*. But, as to the *Bill*, the unhappy *Bill*, it would seem, if I read right, that we are to be deprived of the delectable entertainment, which your *promised revival* of it would have afforded us, for the reports tell me, that that amiable and enlightened personage, Sir THOMAS LETHBRIDGE, having asked you, *when* you intended to revive the *Bill*, you answered, that "While such a proposition with respect to parishes and the poor-rate as was laid before them on a former night by the Noble Marquis, was likely to be carried into effect, or, indeed, remained undecided, any attempt to *afford relief by law* was altogether *nugatory*." Bless me! What *can* this mean? Your *Bill* related to the *marriage* of labourers; it proposed to refuse relief to such as should marry

after a certain time and to the produce of the marriage also ; it proposed to refuse relief to persons *able* to work, without any consideration as to their ability to *get work to do*. If this were a proper and wise law, why should the proposition to lend parishes money prevent the passing of it? Why should a permanent regulation such as you proposed, be prevented by a mere temporary measure like that which the Ministers have in view? To be sure, their project is what, I believe, it is not *lawful* to describe ; especially when we hear Lord Liverpool say, that the *aid* may probably be given in the shape of *public works*! What! really, literally, "*digging holes one day to fill them up the next!*" Can any man look at these schemes, and say, that the **THING** can possibly hold together for any length of time! What, however, has this project to do with *your Bill*?" If you meant to deprive us of the delight, the renewal of

that entertainment, that made us so gay last winter, why, you were the master of your own acts, and you had only to tell us your pleasure ; but, really, it was something that I do not like to describe, to disappoint us with the giving of *such a reason* for this disappointment.

Before I conclude, let me give you a piece of advice, Lawyer Scarlett ; and that is, to *think long* before you again wantonly assault me. There is a *time* for all things ; and, if you had only a millionth part of as much sagacity as you have of spite and of petulance, you would perceive that the time for you and Denman and "Glory" and your common friend, the private-letter man, *is passed* ; and passed, too, never to return! If you had so little success ; if all your combined efforts, all your desperate attempts, all those assaults which you relied so much upon in 1819 and 1820 ; if all these, when the vessel was

hemmed in by shallows and rocks, could only make her *ship a sea*, what can you expect to do *now*, when, with her masts renewed and her tackles righted, she has the port in full view with wind and tide at her back! Mr. BROUGHAM, with a *will*, perhaps, equal to your own, has more wisdom. He sees what is what! He, instead of continuing to assault me, wisely takes my opinions, and, by those decorations, of which he has great store, makes men believe, or *affect* to believe, that they are his own. He can see clearly enough, that the speeches and even the plans of the Ministers are *answers to me*, and not to *him*, or to any of their ostensible opponents. This the *whole country sees* too: it is the subject of conversation everywhere; except, perhaps, amongst those who have the wisdom to think, that they provide for their own safety by making such a man as *you* a member for Peterborough. And, while *this* is the case; while there

is scarcely a single man in the whole kingdom who does not see this, and talk of it too, you must needs come with your little skiff and brave that sweeping prow which has sent so many once-stately ships to the bottom!

WM. COBBETT.

SALT TAX.

SIR,—I shall be glad if you will take an opportunity, as early as convenient, to show in your Register, how it is that the *tax on salt* is of so much importance to the farming interest as it is stated to be. I have been a reader of your Register many years. No writer that I am acquainted with has said so much as yourself against this tax. Indeed, soon

after you came from America, other subjects, and which tens of you alluded to it so frequently, thousands would do *just now*, had and, very often, with so much they as much generosity) still, earnestness, that I could not help however, *I cannot perceive the* thinking it savoured more of eccentricity than of that clearness and *vast importance of this tax*; and, as I thus ingenuously confess my ignorance, I feel persuaded you will help me to a clear understanding of the subject.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

W. J.

London, 23 Feb. 1822.

ANSWER.

All taxes press upon the whole of the community, except on those who receive taxes. Some, however, are longer than others are before they cause the pressure to be felt by the farmer and by the labouring classes; and some fall

but in a slight degree on those classes. The *salt tax* is not one of these. It comes, at once, and deducts weekly from the wages of the labourer. Salt is an *indispensible* necessary of life; no vegetables, no butter, no cheese, no bread, without salt. Kill a *pig*: the pig is now cheap enough; but where is the *half guinea* to come from for salt to cure the meat, when, if there were no tax, the salt might be had for *half a shilling*? On a dairy farm of any size, from twenty to fifty pounds a year must be expended in salt.—We are told, that the tax falls on the *consumer*: that is not the case when the dairy farmer is losing his capital by his business. But, are not farmers and their labourers and their smiths, col-larmakers, wheelwrights, building-repairers; are they not all *consumers* as well as other people?

In short, the labourer *must* use, for himself, full as much salt as the lord; and, therefore, this is a *poll-tax*; so much a *head*, whether the wearer of the head, like the late *COUTTS*, have a million raked together, or whether he have not a farthing more than enough to sustain life.

WM. COBBETT.

DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM

AND

MR. HUSKISSON.

Do you politics want that shall give you a puke?

List to Chichester's Member and Buckingham's Duke.

THESE two personages are very well worthy of *notice*, just at this

time. I shall, next week, notice them in, I trust, *proper style*. They want *justice* done them; and, if I do not do them *justice*, let that mockery that now sticks to the name of *Peter Scarlett*, stick for ever to that of

WM. COBBETT.

POSTSCRIPT.

THE last Numbers of the *Sermons* and of the *Cottage Economy* will be published, now, immediately, and *Tull's Husbandry* is nearly all printed. My movements about the country have caused a little delay here; but, it was absolutely necessary to demolish *Webb Hall*, in order to clear the way for the return of common sense into the heads of

my brother farmers. It was, too, previous to the meeting of the "Collective Wisdom," necessary to make the country clearly see, that *taxation* was the only cause of the *inability to pay rents*. It was, above all, a sacred duty, to put the farmers upon their guard, and to prevent them from giving up *the last shilling of their capital to the Landlords and the Parsons*. As to the Landlords and the Parsons, they may, *when they please*, save their estates and tithes by a *reform of parliament*; so that *that* is no affair of mine! My duties were such as I have described; and, if I have not performed them, no one can say, that I have been dilatory in making the attempt. The sun now begins to shine on both sides of the hedge; and I must attend a little to my garden, pasture, cows and

pigs ; not, however, wholly forgetting the "*Collective Wisdom*," whose proceedings, though in the lamented absence of Mr. BARING, are matter of great curiosity, and will, unless I am very much deceived, be an inexhaustible fund, a real "*surplus*," of amusement for generations yet unborn.